



# The County Observer

## Roanoke County Police Department Crime Prevention Newsletter

### Reducing Dating Violence

#### ABUSE IN A DATING RELATIONSHIP CAN BE CONFUSING AND FRIGHTENING AT ANY AGE.

But for teenagers, this abuse can be even more difficult. Adolescence is a time for learning about relationships. Teens often fail to recognize abuse, especially emotional abuse, because they are inexperienced with dating and may have misperceptions about romantic love. Even if they recognize the abuse, they may hesitate to report it for fear of retaliation or embarrassment.

Possessiveness, controlling behavior, and verbal put-downs are common forms of verbal abuse. Physical abuse may involve pushing, slapping, hitting, pulling hair, threatening with a weapon, and sexual assault including rape. Teen dating violence can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation. Although more females report injuries from dating partners, males suffer emotional abuse at the same rate as females. Regardless of the form of abuse, it is always about the abuser's need for power and control, not the worthiness or failure of the victim.

Building awareness is one of the best ways to combat teen dating violence. Young people need to know what a healthy relationship is, how to recognize abusive behavior in a dating partner, the negative effects that alcohol and other drug use can have on

relationships, how to be assertive with a dating partner, and where to go if they feel unsafe. Crime prevention and domestic violence prevention specialists, parents, teachers, and community organizations can all help identify dating violence and support victims.

The STAR (Southside Teens About Respect) Program, part of the Metropolitan Family Services in Chicago, IL, is a comprehensive, community-based approach that works to reduce teen dating violence by increasing junior high school students' knowledge of its causes and solutions, changing attitudes that support relationship violence, and promoting peer leadership and activism. The program consists of both coed and single-sex sessions in which teens learn violence prevention skills through role plays, instructional videos, an anonymous question box, group discussions, and interactive exercises.

Each session is taught by two STAR educators, one male and one female, who work with assigned teachers in the classroom. Topics include communication (active listening and assertive statements), problem solving in dating situations, defining good male/female relationships, anger management, media messages in music and videos, and attitudes and behaviors conducive to dating. Students learn to identify gender stereotypes, recognize the

cycle of violence, and identify the warning signs of an abusive relationship. The curriculum focuses on power and control issues, emphasizing the importance of saying no and taking no for an answer. Workshops for faculty and parents are also available.

#### BURGLARIES

**District one** had one residential burglary in the 1100 block of Starmount Avenue, and one business burglary in the 3100 block of Peters Creek Road.

**District two** had two residential burglaries in the 7200 block of South Barrens Road, and one business burglary in the 5000 block of Plantation Road.

**District three** had one residential burglary in the 2500 block of Hill Avenue, one residential burglary in the 1800 block of Park Manor Drive, and one business burglary in the 2400 block of Hardy Road.

**District four** had one residential burglary in the 3200 block of Chaparral Drive, one residential burglary in the 4300 block of Electric Road, and one residential burglary in the 5600 block of Franklin Road.

**District five** had one residential burglary in the 4300 block of Garst Mill Road.

**District six** had one residential burglary in the 9000 block of Poor Mountain Road, and one

residential burglary in the 4500 block of Rosecrest Road.

**District seven** had one residential burglary in the 3000 block of Powell Drive, one residential burglary in the 700 block of Tyler Road, and one residential burglary in the 4800 block of West Main Street.

**District eight** had no reported burglaries in February.

### Project Child Safe

The Roanoke County Police Department is participating in Project Child Safe which is a nationwide program to help ensure safe and responsible firearms ownership and storage. It was developed by the National Shooting Sports Foundation and is supported by a U.S. Department of Justice Grant.

The goal of Project Child Safe is to inform and educate all firearms owners on key safety issues and to provide firearms safety kits that include a gun locking device.

The gun locking device distributed in the Project Child Safe program is a cable-style gun lock. Cable locks require that many types of firearms be unlocked before the cable lock is installed, thus providing an extra level of safety.

If you have any questions or wish to receive a free gun lock for your firearm, please contact the Roanoke County Police Crime Prevention Office at 561-8062.

### Work Zone Safety

As Spring approaches there will be many road crews out trying to improve the roadways for all vehicles. Here are some tips that will increase the safety of these workers:

- Pay Close Attention! Signs and work zone flaggers save lives.
- Don't change lanes!
- Be Patient! Remember the work zone crew is working to improve your future ride.
- Expect the unexpected! Keep an eye out for workers and their equipment.
- Stay Alert! Always dedicate your full attention to the roadway.
- Everyday 2 deaths are associated with work zone crashes somewhere in this country.

### Public Talks and Programs

The Roanoke County Police Crime Prevention Office is constantly taking requests for public talks or participation in community events. If you would like a presentation for your group, regardless of age, please call 561-8062. Talks range from young children in schools and churches to senior groups across the county. We look forward to working with your group in the future.

### Crime Prevention Tips

Dating violence or abuse affects one in four teens. Abuse isn't just hitting. It's yelling, threatening, name calling, saying "I'll kill myself if you leave me," obsessive phone calling or paging, and extreme possessiveness. The following are options if your partner is abusing you and you want out:

- Don't put up with abuse. You deserve better.

- Know that you are not alone. Teens from all different backgrounds across the country are involved in or have been involved in a violent relationship.
- Know that the longer you stay in an abusive relationship, the more intense the violence will become.
- Recognize that being drunk is not an excuse for someone to become abusive.
- Talk with your parents, a friend, a counselor, a faith leader or spiritual leader, or someone else that you trust. The more isolated you are from friends and family, the more control the abuser has over you.
- Keep a daily log of the abuse for evidence.
- Do not meet him or her alone. Do not let them in your car or home when you are alone.
- Always tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back.
- Plan and rehearse what you will do if he or she becomes abusive.
- Remember that no one is justified in attacking you just because he or she is angry.

### Neighborhood Watch Program

The Roanoke County Police Department has made some changes to the Neighborhood Watch Program in the last several months in an attempt to be more

efficient. The Crime Prevention Office is trying to become more active in all the groups activities across the county. However, we need your help in making meetings and events. Coordinators, if you would write down a schedule of the month, date, and time that your group meets and either e-mail or mail it to the Roanoke County Police Department c/o Officer Rick Crosier. Please make the schedule for the remainder of 2004. Help us to better serve you and the other citizens of Roanoke County. A meeting of the Neighborhood Watch coordinators will be scheduled sometime in May to discuss a few ideas and program ideas for the rest of the year.

#### Yard Sale Signs

Spring is just around the corner and with it comes yard sales. Please consider the following when placing yard sale signs:

- Do not attach any unauthorized sign to a VDOT sign or post without a permit.
- Do not place any unauthorized sign over or taped to a VDOT sign.
- Do not block the view of a VDOT sign with an unauthorized sign.
- Do erect temporary yard sale signs on stakes or poles.
- Do remove them after the yard sale event. Some signs are being left up and become litter when blown down.
- Do make signs visible. At least make the numbers

and letters five inches tall and one half inch wide.

#### Vacation Plans

Before leaving on vacation, whether for a few days or a few weeks remember the following:

- Avoid discussing your vacation plans in public.
- Set automatic timers for indoor lights and a radio on a talk station.
- Turn the telephone ringer to low.
- Get someone to mow your yard, take in the mail, newspapers, and magazines.
- Ask a neighbor to park in your driveway occasionally.
- Lock all doors, including your garage interior door, and all outbuildings.
- Pin or place a pole in the track of ground floor windows, and sliding glass doors.
- Leave keys with a neighbor. Do not hide extra keys outside.
- Notify the police of your vacation plans and where they can get a set of your keys. Remember, to call the police when you return. You can call the Roanoke County Police at 561-8036 to request a vacation check.

#### R.A.D.

The Roanoke County Police Department sponsors, at no cost to the participants, four 3-hour

sessions on self defense. The classes are for women ages 13 and older.

For more information, contact: Officer B. Hook or Officer A. Noel at [RAD@co.roanoke.va.us](mailto:RAD@co.roanoke.va.us) or call 561-8074.

#### Telephone Numbers

Emergency	911
Non-Emergency	561-8036
Criminal Investigation	561-8063
Vice-Narcotics	561-8097
Crime Prevention	561-8062
<a href="mailto:rcrosier@co.roanoke.va.us">rcrosier@co.roanoke.va.us</a>	
Rape Aggression Defense	561-8074

[RAD@co.roanoke.va.us](mailto:RAD@co.roanoke.va.us)

AEP (Street Lights, Outages):  
1-800-956-4237

**CRIME Line** **344-8500**  
[www.crimeline.org](http://www.crimeline.org)

#### Websites

Roanoke County Police  
[www.co.roanoke.va.us/police](http://www.co.roanoke.va.us/police)

Commonwealth of Virginia  
Terrorism Alert System new web  
site address  
[www.commonwealthpreparedness.virginia.gov/](http://www.commonwealthpreparedness.virginia.gov/)

National Sheriff's Association  
Neighborhood Watch Program  
[www.usaonwatch.org](http://www.usaonwatch.org)

RVTv 3 – Roanoke Valley  
Television [www.rvtv.org](http://www.rvtv.org)